

REMARKS

Claims 5, 13, 14, 16 and 17 are cancelled without prejudice. New claims 22-24 are presented herewith. No new matter is sought to be entered by the presentation of new claims 22-24.

The Examiner objected to the drawings for their failure to illustrate a drill bit, which is an element of the claims. The recitation of a drill bit has been deleted from the claims.

The Examiner objected to the title, and suggested a title. By this amendment, the Examiner's suggestion has been adopted.

The Examiner requested that the application be amended to include section headings. By this amendment, section headings have been added.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 9 and 10 based upon Thompson U. S. Patent 4,834,198. Both with regard to claim 1 and claim 10, the Examiner refers to the latch release tube 172 in Thompson as the accompanying device. As the gripping means of the accompanying device (as defined in claims 1 and 10), the Examiner refers to the landing ring 166, which is the latch receiving recess provided on the inside of the drill string 10, for the inner latches 162a and 162b. By "the gripping means of the accompanying device" is understood that the accompanying device is provided with gripping means, in other words, that the gripping means form a part of the accompanying device. The landing ring 166 of Thompson is not a part of the latch release tube 172. The landing ring 166 is never even in contact with the latch release tube. Further, the landing ring 166 cannot be regarded as constituting gripping means. Therefore, Thompson neither discloses nor suggests the element for which the Examiner is relying upon Thompson.

With regard to the general function of the simultaneous locking of the inner tube in relation to the outer tube and release of the gripping means of an accompanying device, as defined in claims 1, 9 and 10, no such simultaneous actions are described in Thompson.

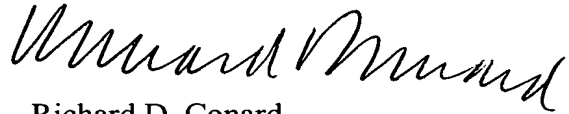
The Examiner cited the following additional listed U. S. Patents as of interest: 2,019,176; 2,073,263; 3,610,675; 3,701,389; 3,739,865; 4,187,919; 4,466,497; and, 5,934,393. Applicant has considered these references and believes that his claims, as amended herein, are patentable over the references of record.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that this application is entitled to favorable consideration, culminating in allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Applicant hereby petitions for a two month extension of time to respond to the

May 30, 2003 official action, extending the period for response to October 30, 2003. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be due to constitute this a timely response to the May 30, 2003 official action to our undersigned counsel's deposit account with reference to file number 3061-69940. A duplicate copy of this authorization is enclosed for that purpose.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard D. Conard".

Richard D. Conard
Attorney Reg. No. 27321
Attorney for Applicant

Indianapolis, IN
(317) 231-7285
INDS02 RDC 617182